

9 June 2003

*EPF104 06/09/2003

Text: **U.S. Welcomes New Zealand's Assistance for Iraq, Afghanistan**

(June 9 State Department release on reconstruction efforts) (230)

The State Department issued a press release June 9 expressing appreciation for New Zealand's decision to "expand its contribution to reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, and to make a meaningful contribution to stabilization and reconstruction in Iraq."

Following is the text of the June 9 press release:

(begin text)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesman
June 9, 2003

STATEMENT BY PHILIP T. REEKER, DEPUTY SPOKESMAN

NEW ZEALAND: ASSISTANCE TO IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

The United States warmly welcomes the New Zealand government's decision to expand its contribution to reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, and to make a meaningful contribution to stabilization and reconstruction in Iraq. New Zealand has also demonstrated that its commitment as a partner in the struggle against terrorism is strong and abiding.

The United States deeply appreciates New Zealand's continuing support for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, where New Zealand has now agreed to contribute to, and possibly lead, a Provincial Reconstruction Team and offer personnel to help train the Afghan National Army. New Zealand's offer of an engineering unit to be attached to the UK-led multinational division in Iraq is particularly welcome and very much appreciated. New Zealand is also offering to supply agricultural experts and US\$580,000 in support of efforts by the Coalition Provisional Authority to rehabilitate the Iraqi agricultural sector.

(end text)

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>)